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RESOLUTION 1217 (1998)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3959th meeting,
on 22 December 1998

The Security Council,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus of 10 December 1998 (S/1998/1149 and Add.1),

Welcoming also the letter to the President of the Security Council from the Secretary-General on his Mission of Good Offices in Cyprus of 14 December 1998 (S/1998/1166),

Noting that the Government of Cyprus has agreed that in view of the prevailing conditions in the island it is necessary to keep the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) beyond 31 December 1998,

Reaffirming all its earlier resolutions on Cyprus,

Calling once more upon all States to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus and requesting them, along with the parties concerned, to refrain from any action which might prejudice that sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, as well as from any attempt of partition of the island or its unification with any other country,

Noting with concern that restrictions to the freedom of movement of UNFICYP continue,

Noting further with satisfaction that the situation along the ceasefire lines remained generally calm, notwithstanding numerous minor violations,

Reiterating the need to make progress on a comprehensive political solution,

1. Decides to extend the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period ending on 30 June 1999;

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2. Reminds both sides of their obligations to prevent any violence directed against UNFICYP personnel, to cooperate fully with UNFICYP and to ensure its complete freedom of movement;

3. Calls upon the military authorities on both sides to refrain from any action, particularly in the vicinity of the buffer zone, which would exacerbate tensions;

4. Reiterates its grave concern at the continuing excessive levels of military forces and armaments in the Republic of Cyprus and the rate at which they are being expanded, upgraded and modernized, including by the introduction of sophisticated weaponry, and the lack of progress towards any significant reduction in the number of foreign troops in the Republic of Cyprus, which threaten to raise tensions both on the island and in the region and complicate efforts to negotiate an overall political settlement;

5. Calls upon all concerned to commit themselves to a reduction in defence spending and a reduction in the number of foreign troops in the Republic of Cyprus to help restore confidence between the parties and as a first step towards the withdrawal of non-Cypriot forces as described in the set of ideas (S/24472, Annex), stresses the importance of eventual demilitarization of the Republic of Cyprus as an objective in the context of an overall comprehensive settlement and encourages the Secretary-General to continue to promote efforts in this direction;

6. Reaffirms that the status quo is unacceptable and that negotiations on a final political solution of the Cyprus problem have been at an impasse for too long;

7. Reaffirms its position that a Cyprus settlement must be based on a State of Cyprus with a single sovereignty and international personality and a single citizenship, with its independence and territorial integrity safeguarded, and comprising two politically equal communities as described in the relevant Security Council resolutions, in a bi-communal and bi-zonal federation, and that such a settlement must exclude union in whole or in part with any other country or any form of partition or secession;

8. Stresses its full support for the Secretary-General's Mission of Good Offices and for the efforts of his Special Adviser and Deputy Special Representative for Cyprus to resume when appropriate a sustained process of direct negotiations aimed at achieving a comprehensive settlement on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions, and stresses also the importance of concerted efforts to work with the Secretary-General to that end;

9. Calls once again upon the leaders of the two communities to commit themselves to this process of negotiations, and to cooperate actively and constructively with the Secretary-General, his Special Adviser and his Deputy Special Representative and to resume when appropriate the direct dialogue, and urges all States to lend their full support to these efforts;

10. Welcomes the ongoing efforts by UNFICYP to implement its humanitarian mandate in respect of Greek Cypriots and Maronites living in the northern part

of the island and Turkish Cypriots living in the southern part, as mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General;

11. Welcomes also the resumption of work of the Committee on Missing Persons, and calls for implementation without delay of the agreement on missing persons of 31 July 1997;

12. Reiterates its support for the efforts of the United Nations and others concerned to promote the holding of bi-communal events so as to build cooperation, trust and mutual respect between the two communities;

13. Welcomes the efforts made to improve the efficiency of UNFICYP, including by the establishment of a new Civil Affairs Branch;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report by 10 June 1999 on the implementation of this resolution;

15. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.